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IN MEMORIAM. MATTHEW FONTAINE  
MAURY.

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In memoriam. Matthew Fontaine



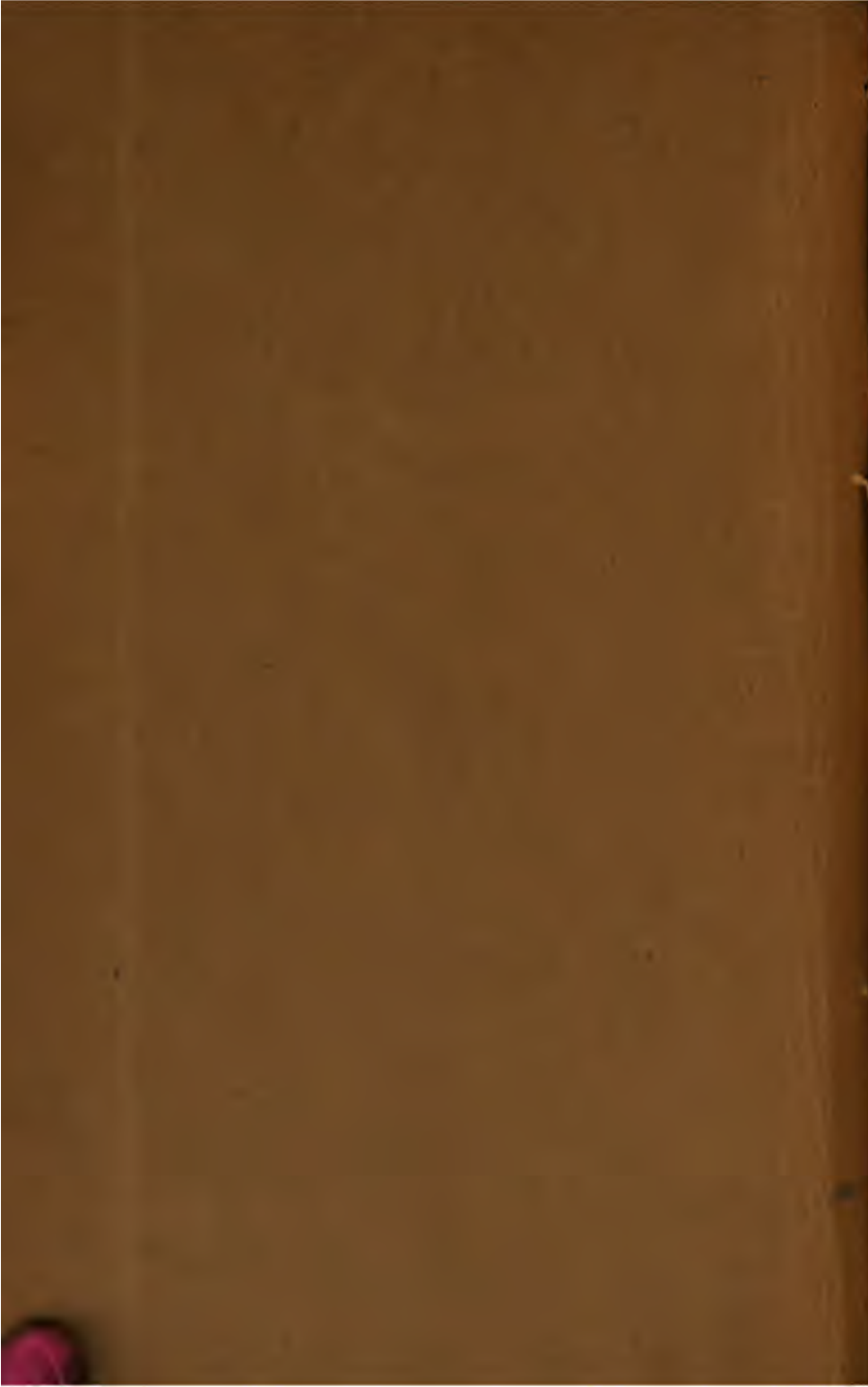
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In Memoriam.



# In Memoriam.

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Matthew Fontaine Maury, LL.D.

University Cambridge, England.

BORN IN SPOTTSYLVANIA COUNTY, VIRGINIA,

*January 14, 1806.*

DIED AT VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE, LEXINGTON, VA.,

*February 1, 1873.*

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters,"

"These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep."

\* \* \* \* "So he bringeth them unto their desired haven."

PSALM cvii., 23d, 24th, 30th.



1873.



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SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,  
VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE,

4 p. m., February 1, 1873.

The Academic Board met at the call of the Acting Superintendent; present, Col. J. T. L. PRESTON, *Act'g Supt.*; Col. T. H. WILLIAMSON, Col. R. L. MADISON, Col. S. SHIP, Col. WM. B. BLAIR, Col. JOHN M. BROOKE, Col. M. M'DONALD, Col. M. D. HARDIN, Col. T. M. SEMMES, Col. W. E. CUTSHAW, and Col. J. W. LYELL. Absent on public duty, Gen. F. H. SMITH, *Supt.*

The Acting Superintendent read the following General Orders :

HEADQUARTERS  
VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE,

February 1, 1873.

GENERAL ORDERS, }  
No. 5. }

I. It is with feelings of profound solemnity, that the Acting Superintendent announces to the Officers of the Institute and the Corps of Cadets, the death of Commodore M. F. MAURY, LL.D., Professor of Physics in the Virginia Military Institute.

He died at 12:30 to-day.

The illness, which has thus terminated fatally, was of long duration, beginning with the return of Com. MAURY from an extended and laborious tour of public service. All that skill and affection could do to arrest the fatal blow was in vain. It was not in vain, however, that the captain, philosopher, and Christian had the opportunity allowed to show, for the instruction of young and old, how bravely, calmly, and truthfully such a man meets death.

It would be inappropriate, in this preliminary order, to touch upon the varied achievements in the service of his State, his country, and the world, which gained for him his illustrious fame, or to delineate the traits of character which endeared him to the hearts of all who enjoyed the privilege of his friendship. The world will hasten to offer present tribute to his memory, and his career will afford a lofty theme for future biography.

II. Academic duties in the Institute will be suspended until further orders, and the Corps of Cadets will hold itself in readiness for such participation in the solemn ceremonies of the occasion as may be hereafter ordered.

III. There will be a meeting of the Academic Board in the office of the Superintendent, this afternoon, at 4 P. M.

IV. The usual badge of mourning will be worn by Professors, Officers, and Cadets, for the period of thirty days.

By command of Col. J. T. L. PRESTON,

*Act'g Supt.*

F. H. SMITH, JR.,

*Adjutant, V. M. I.*

The Acting Superintendent having announced the death of Commodore M. F. MAURY, it was ordered that the following minute be spread upon the records of the Academic Board :

With reverence we record to-day the death of our illustrious associate. The latest to enter our Faculty, he was the oldest man of our number. All accorded to him the respect due to his years, but with a far profounder sentiment, all rendered to him the homage that is the meed of fame.

We claim the solemn pre-eminence over every other institution known to history, when upon the

register of our dead, we add to the name of STONEWALL JACKSON, the name of Commodore MAURY.

But at this moment, sorrow banishes even legitimate pride.

The civilized world will hasten to offer to her great benefactor, the Philosopher of the Seas, an acclamation of praise, in which our feeble tribute would be silenced.

But the world that knew him only as he was conspicuous, cannot mourn for him as we do, who knew him in the intimate relations of friendship and brotherhood. When shall we know another so true, so wise, so pure, so genial, so kind, so affable?

We accept his long life as the embodiment and example of all that constitutes the gentleman, the sage, the philanthropist, the patriot, and the Christian.

As long as the planets roll their nightly courses through the sky, his name will be inscribed on the starry firmament. As long as the ocean heaves, the winds blow, and men seek distant lands in commerce, his praise will not want a voice. Till men forget science, he will not be forgotten; and until men despise patriotism, his example will teach us to give

up all at the call of our native land. And for ourselves, we will be dead to the sweetness of friendship, the love of virtue, and the admiration of Christian piety, when we cease to cherish the memory of him whose death we here record.

The life of Commodore MAURY will furnish ample materials for a lofty biography in future. We would not undertake, in these pages, even to touch upon this field. It is proper, however, that we should here make an authentic register of the most important facts of his crowded life, with the accurate dates belonging to them.

MATTHEW FONTAINE MAURY, the son of RICHARD MAURY, of Huguenot descent, was born on the 14th of January, 1806, in Spottsylvania County, Virginia. In his fourth year his father emigrated to Tennessee, establishing himself near Franklin, a village in the vicinity of Nashville. In his sixteenth year, young MAURY entered Harpeth Academy, then under the charge of the Rev. JAMES H. O<sup>+</sup>BEY, afterwards Bishop of Tennessee.

In 1825 he was appointed Midshipman in the Navy of the United States, making his first cruise

in the frigate Brandywine, on the coast of Europe, and in the Mediterranean. The voyage across the Atlantic was rendered memorable by tempestuous weather, and the presence of General LAFAYETTE as a passenger to France. In 1826 the Brandywine returned to the United States, and MAURY was transferred to the sloop of war Vincennes for a cruise around the world. At the expiration of the cruise, he passed with credit the usual examination, and, in 1831, was appointed Master (Navigator) of the sloop of war Falmouth, then fitting out for the Pacific. He did not complete the cruise in this vessel, being transferred to the schooner Dolphin, serving as Acting 1st Lieutenant, until again transferred to the frigate Potomac, in which vessel he returned to the United States in 1834. He then published his first work, *Maury's Navigation*, which was adopted as a textbook in the Navy.

During this intermission of active service, he was married to Miss ANN HERNDON, of Virginia, a sister of the gallant Lieutenant HERNDON, of the Navy, who, by his conduct on the occasion of the foundering of the Central America, which vessel he commanded, added another line to the chronicle of naval heroism.

From the time of entering the service, MAURY exhibited those characteristic traits and qualities which finally rendered him famous throughout the world. He was selected as Astronomer, and offered the appointment of Hydrographer to the Exploring Expedition to the South Seas, then preparing to sail under the command of Lieutenant WILKES. These he declined.

In 1837, after thirteen years' service, he was promoted to the grade of Lieutenant and not long afterwards met with the painful accident by which he was lamed for life. For several years unable to perform the active duties of his profession, he devoted the time to mental culture, to the improvement of the Navy, and to other matters of national concern. His views, forcibly stated, were published first, and mainly in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, of Richmond, Va., over the *nom de plume* of *Harry Bluff*, and under the general caption of "*Scraps from the Lucky Bag*."

The influence of these essays was effective. To it may be justly ascribed the great reforms then made in the Navy, as well as the establishment of a Naval



Academy. He also advocated the establishment of a Navy Yard at Memphis, Tenn.; which was done by Act of Congress. Under his direction, were made at that point, by Lieutenant MARR, since lost at sea, the first series of observations upon the flow of the Mississippi. He proposed a system of observations which would enable the observers to give information, by telegraph, as to the state of the river and its tributaries, to the Captains of steamers, and all others who might be interested. He advocated the enlargement of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, that vessels of war might pass between the Gulf and the Lakes. For this he received the thanks of the Legislature of Illinois. He suggested to Congress, through one of its committees, having charge of the subject, plans for the disposition of the drowned lands along the Mississippi, belonging to the Government; which, as has since become evident, would have been fruitful of good results had they been adopted. In the interests of Commerce, he brought forward and successfully advocated, in a series of papers, what is known as the "*Warehousing System.*"

In 1842, in the 36th year of his age, he was appointed Superintendent of the Depots of Charts and Instruments at Washington. Up to this time the field

in which MAURY labored was limited to his own country. Placed in a position which afforded the means necessary to the full employment of his powers, he was not slow to develop and execute the plans which, in the course of his reflection and experience, he had thought useful. The simple Depot for Charts and Instruments was transformed into an *Observatory*. Surrounded by such men as FERGUSON, WALKER, HUBBARD, COFFIN, KEITH, and other faithful workers, whom he inspired with his own enthusiasm, he made the *Naval Observatory National* in its importance and relations to the Astronomical world.

This accomplished, he added to those labors of the Astronomer, fruitful of results for future years, the task of unravelling the Winds and Currents of the Ocean, and of measuring its depths. In pursuance of these objects he collected from the log-books of ships of war, long stored in the Government offices, and from all other accessible sources, the material suited to his purpose. By numerous assistants (junior officers of the Navy) it was tabulated and by him discussed, yielding for the guidance of the mariner on a single route, the combined experience, as it were, of a thousand captains of infallible memories. And yet, when MAURY offered

his first Chart to navigators, with his new route to Rio,  
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Charybdis, falling into a region of calms or those contrary winds from the south-west, now known as *Maury's Monsoons*. But MAURY discovered that the inshore current of St. Roque was comparatively feeble, and that the winds favored the navigator as he drew in with the land; and so he said, Stand boldly on, and if need be, tack and work by under the land.

To Captain JACKSON, commanding the W. H. D. C. Wright, of Baltimore, belongs the honor of being the first to beard the lion, Cape St. Roque, and to triumphantly demonstrate the accuracy of the Sailing Directions. Inferences were supplanted by facts. The maritime world hastened to acknowledge the benefit conferred, to contribute aid to the rapid and complete application of MAURY'S system to all seas. The way was open, and there were thousands to follow.

The Brussels Conference, of which MAURY was the author, provided for co-operation. Its occurrence and its action marked the era of international adoption of his system of observation. Simple as were the means by which these results were obtained, they astonished the world.

He also instituted the System of Deep-Sea Sounding, rendering easy of accomplishment all operations of

that character since undertaken, and leading directly to the establishment of Telegraphic communication between the continents by Cable on the bed of the ocean. In these labors he was effectively assisted by the genius of one of our colleagues, Col. JOHN M. BROOKE, then on duty in the Naval Observatory, whose Deep-Sea Sounding Apparatus first brought up specimens, whilst it fathomed the depths of the ocean.

But to these immediately practical and beneficial results there was still something to be added. The investigations, of which they were the first fruits, presented materials for a work that should make clear to the landsman as well as to the mariner, the wonderful mechanism of the Sea, with its currents and its atmosphere; and this he did in his well-known work, "*The Physical Geography of the Sea*;" which, translated into the languages of France, Germany, Holland, Norway, Spain, and Italy, has spread the fame of its author throughout Europe.

To enumerate the various subjects of interest and importance to his own country, which MAURY suggested and successfully advocated, cannot be done in this brief notice of a life so full of action. By HUMBOLDT he was declared to be the founder of a new and important

science. The principal Powers of Europe recognized the value of his services to mankind. France, Austria, Prussia, Russia, Denmark, Belgium, Portugal, Sweden, Sardinia, Holland, Bremen, and the Papal States, bestowed Orders of Knighthood and other honors. The Academies of Science of Paris, Berlin, Brussels, St. Petersburg and Mexico conferred the honor of membership.

When Virginia, seceding from the Union, called upon her sons, he promptly resigned his position in the Federal Navy, to take part in the defence of his native State. He was selected as one of the Council of Three appointed to assist the Governor in that important crisis, and so served until the Army and Navy of Virginia were incorporated with those of the Confederacy.

When it became known in Europe that he had resigned his position in the Federal service, he was invited to Russia and to France, to continue in either of those countries the great work to which his life had been devoted. These offers, from a sense of duty, he declined. But the Government of the Confederate States, rightly estimating the great aid and service which he would render in that condition of affairs which made the South so largely dependent upon

foreign countries for material and products of manufacture, sent him abroad, invested with suitable powers, which he continued to exercise, with his usual ability, until the close of the war.

Then, in anticipation of a large emigration from the Southern States to Mexico, with the view of aiding his countrymen there, he went to that country, where he was cordially received by the Emperor Maximilian, who appointed him to a place in his cabinet. Thence he was sent on a special mission to Europe. The revolution terminating his relations with that country, left him in straitened circumstances. Unwilling to accept aid without rendering an equivalent return, he resumed, as a means of support, his scientific and literary labors, pursuing those studies that to him were most congenial. To these he added experimental researches, having for their object the perfecting of new applications of electricity, in which he was eminently successful, and in preparing his Manual of Geography, subsequently published in this country. During this period the great University of Cambridge honored him with the degree of LL.D., and the Emperor of the French invited him to the Superintendency of the Imperial Observatory at Paris.

He preferred to accept the Chair of Physics in the *Virginia Military Institute*. When the letter conveying this appointment expressed the belief that his master mind, turned to the land, would produce results as beneficial, as when penetrating the august mysteries of the Sea, his reply was worthy of the man. He wrote: "You have marked out a great field for me—much broader than one would imagine. I am willing to enter upon it."

Once more at home, on the soil of Virginia, surrounded by his family and warm friends, he bent his energies with the same vigor and enthusiasm which characterized those honor-reflecting labors of former days, to the renewal and increase of his country's prosperity.

The catholic breadth of his mind tolerated no partial dealing with the potent elements of progress, which he was wont to wield, in forming those comprehensive plans worthy of the age and of the demand which calls for the generalization of the innumerable, but as yet uncombined, elements of general prosperity. The *Physical Survey of Virginia*, in connection with the establishment of through routes by rail, and of a great and free water line uniting the East and



West, and this again in connection with foreign commerce by his familiar pathways on the sea; the perfecting of a system of observations and reports on the crops of the world, tending to reduce the fluctuations, and to destroy the <sup>facilities</sup> ~~facilities~~ of trade in the staple productions of agriculture, which indeed was but an extension of what he years ago proposed as a complement of his sea work, and which is to-day measurably represented in the operation of that division of the public service which has for its special object the benefit of agriculture and commerce—such were the aims, noble in simplicity, grand in execution, which engaged the mind of MAURY.

The benefits conferred upon mankind by MAURY cannot be measured by any estimate of their pecuniary value, great as that value may be. If we include the general gain to civilization, by increased facilities of communication between widely separated parts of the earth, we shall not then have the measure of his work. Ranking higher than these are the *moral* results of his teaching. The directions by which seamen were enabled to apply the principles and laws which his genius had wrought out of the vast mass of material which, from all parts of the world,

they spread before him, were accompanied by other teachings. Passionately devoted to the study of natural phenomena, seeing in all the guiding hand of the Creator, profoundly conscious of a Ruling Providence, he strove to convey to others knowledge of those things which filled him with admiration and joy—singing ever a song of praise; and by the power of this master mind was there awakened in the sea world a spirit of observation and research, a love of Nature, and a respect for God in His works and Majesty, which those unfamiliar with the sea and its affairs, may hardly be expected to understand.

From one of the many grateful acknowledgments of this influence may be quoted the following, which, while it excites pleasing emotion in the mind of the reader, is in itself an expression of a deeply moved spirit:

“I am happy to contribute my mite towards furnishing you with material to work out still further towards perfection your great and glorious task, not only in pointing out the most speedy routes for ships to pursue over the ocean, but also of teaching us sailors to look about us, and see by what wonderful manifestations of the Great God we are continually

surrounded. For myself, I am free to confess that for many years I commanded a ship, and although never insensible to the beauties of nature upon the sea or land, I yet feel that until I took up your work, I had been traversing the ocean blindfolded. I did not think, I did not know, the amazing and beautiful combination of all the works of Him whom you so beautifully term the 'Great First Thought.' I feel that, aside from any pecuniary profit to myself from your labors, you have done me good as a man. You have taught me to look above, around, and beneath me, and to recognize God's hand in every element by which I am surrounded. I am ~~gratified~~ *grateful* for this personal benefit."

After this succinct but comprehensive summary of the most important events of his life, it only remains to place upon these pages a record of the circumstances of his last illness, and of a death as instructive in its teaching as his life was noble in its example.

During the past summer he received an invitation to address an Agricultural Society of Massachusetts. This invitation he accepted, and leaving the Institute on the 12th of September, addressed the Society at the village of Norfolk, near Boston. Returning to New York,

he took an excursion to Niagara, Detroit, Chicago, and St. Louis, having accepted an invitation to address the State Agricultural Society of Missouri, at its Annual Fair. Here his reception was most enthusiastic; but he was already so much exhausted, that he could not read his valuable address in an audible tone. After spending some two weeks in Missouri, he returned to Virginia to meet an appointment to address the Seaboard Agricultural Society, on the 23d of October, at Norfolk. The condition of his health admonished him not to undertake this task, and he immediately returned home, reaching the Institute on 23d of the month. His condition was exceedingly distressing, and even alarming. Constant gastric pain and nausea, occasional hematemesis, feeble pulse, much depression of mind, cool extremities, and an anxious expression of countenance. He received at once the professional attention of the two medical officers of the Institute, and the treatment was attended with varying success for two or three weeks. Then the symptoms seemed to yield entirely to the remedial agents; but still any deviation from the blandest diet would reproduce the symptoms, necessitating a rigid adherence to the simplest regimen.

About the middle of December, he had the addi-

tional and valued professional assistance of his brother-in-law, Dr. B. S. HERNDON, of Savannah, formerly of Fredericksburg, whose tender solicitude and large experience afforded him great comfort. Indeed, his disease seemed completely conquered, and the only difficulty was to improve his vital and recuperative powers. To do this every expedient that affection could devise, or professional experience suggest, was tried faithfully, persistently, but in vain.

Perceiving himself, at last, how futile were the exertions to restore or renew his strength, he gradually became convinced that any further effort was not only useless, but opposed to the Divine will in his case ; and four days previous to his death, calling his attending physician to his side, he said : " I want to tell you how grateful I am for all your kind and persistent efforts in my behalf. I want to tell you that I believe you have done your *whole* duty ; and now," he added, " and *now*, I want you to leave me to God ! " And with a look of affectionate decision, he waved him away with one hand, while with the other he pointed silently upwards. After this he took scarcely anything, with the exception of a little beef tea or champagne, and these at long intervals, and evidently only to gratify the earnest entreaty of his son, Col. R. L. MAURY.

A Christian from intelligent conviction—a diligent and reverential reader of the Divine word—he was not demonstrative in his religion. His life bore testimony that he walked with God. The effect of his disease was to depress his spirits, which were naturally cheerful—even playful—and this depression continued for long and weary weeks, against every effort of the loving members of his family to comfort and cheer him. He would affectionately wave them away with his hand, and asked to be alone. He desired to be alone, that he “might commune with his own heart, on his bed, and be still.” He was putting his house in order, and preparing to meet his God. It was observed that by degrees he became brighter and more cheerful. The comforting assurance that he was “accepted in the Beloved,” found grateful utterance in such words as these—

“Lord God, Thou Redeemer of the world, and Ransomer of my soul! Have mercy on me. Pardon my sins. Teach me the errors of my way. I thank my Gracious Master, He has done so now.”

These utterances were made as if in solemn communion with God. Then he would pass into a doze, and as he aroused, he continued—

“And Who has been so merciful as to preserve my senses to the last.”

His thoughts were much turned to his absent children, who were hourly expected, with expressions of the tenderest love towards them. Whenever he aroused from one of his fitful slumbers, he would anxiously ask—“Have they come?” When told that they had not arrived, but were expected that day. Then said he, “If unable to speak when they come, I want this prayer repeated to them—and he repeated the prayer which he had just offered, and without completing it, he added, “Put this in B——’s mouth—in N——’s mouth—in W——’s mouth—and let them say, “*Glory be to God for His mercies.*” His children arrived in time to receive his blessing.

Hearing the pencil running over the paper, as one of his sons was endeavoring to trace his utterances, he said—“Somebody is taking down what I say ;” and he added—“Ever since the time when I broke my leg (thirty-three years before) I have used this prayer. It contains eleven petitions—not designedly, but still there are eleven—and I want it taken down. Now keep me up to the eleven ; they have all been answered.”

Here he exhibited signs of fatigue and prostration,

for he had taken no nourishment for several hours. And he again continued :

“ Lord Jesus, Thou Son of God and Redeemer of the world ! Have mercy upon me—that’s *one*. Pardon my sins—that’s *two*. Teach me the errors of my way—that’s *three*. Give me a new heart, and a right mind ; enable me and all mine to do Thy will, and in all things to keep Thy law.” (Here he paused from exhaustion.) “ Teach me that I may ask the things necessary for eternal life ! ” Then he seemed to forget that he was dictating, and his utterances became short, ejaculatory petitions ; and these were followed by fragments of the prayer he was endeavoring to leave with his children—repeating at times the same petition, and then adding, “ Lord, pardon my sins, for Thine be the Power, and the Kingdom, and the Glory, forever and forever.”

He repeated with great distinctness and precision the first part of the prayer, pausing between each petition to enable his amanuensis to keep up, and waiting for the catch word, as was his habit in dictating his letters. He counted the petitions himself, saying after each, “ *that’s one*,” “ *that’s two* ; ” but when he got to *four*, he had begun to get weary, and forget that he was dictating, and then pass away into a doze. Then he would



begin again, and his changed tone of voice indicated earnest, prayerful supplication.

When he had concluded, he again reverted to his original intention to have his prayer taken down, and asked, "Have I said eleven?" Seeing that he was overcome by the fatigue of his effort, the one nearest him said, "Yes," for he had two weeks before repeated the prayer in full to his wife; and the petitions now taken down in their fragmentary form, as they were dictated, in the midst of great bodily weakness, were supplemented by those which had previously been recorded.

The Psalms of David were very precious to him, and were often read to him during his sickness. He was particularly fond of the 130th Psalm—*De profundis*. On one occasion, while his son was reading this Psalm to him, seeing that he had closed his eyes, and presuming that he was asleep, he stopped his reading. Immediately opening his eyes, he continued the Psalm where the stop had occurred, saying: "I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait; and in His word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning."

He said he had endeavored in all his works to

praise God, as David did, and had it pleased God that his life should be prolonged to complete his *Physical Geography*, he had intended to make this more prominent still in his last work.

He had prayed that he might retain all his faculties to the last, and that it might be an evidence that all his prayers were answered. He was frequently seen to test the clearness of his mind, and a gratified smile would steal over his face. He had requested his son, Col. MAURY to tell him when death was approaching. On the morning of his death, he was asked whether he knew that he was dying. He smiled, and replied, "Yes." "Is all well with you, my father?" He turned upon him a look beaming with the tenderest love, and answered, "*All is well!*" These were his last words, and although his lips continued to move as if in silent prayer, the motion became feebler and feebler, and then gently as an infant's slumber, his spirit ascended to his God.

Thus peacefully has passed away this profound philosopher and illustrious man—full of years—full of honors—full of fame—of fame beyond the wildest dreams his youthful ambition had ever pictured! But amid all the homage of the world, and all the plaudits

of the nations, his heart ever turned to a crucified Redeemer, as the needle to the pole; and he brought all the powers of his gifted mind, and all the aspirations of his lofty soul, and laid them as votive offerings at the foot of the Cross.

It is further ordered by the Academic Board--

1. That the Library Hall of the Virginia Military Institute be draped in mourning for the period of thirty days; that the drooping flags of Virginia and Tennessee be placed over the bier on the day of the funeral; and that the State flag be displayed at half mast.

2. That a copy of this minute be transmitted by the Superintendent to the family of the deceased, with the expression of the deep sympathy of this Board in their great sorrow.

3. That a number of copies of this minute be appropriately printed for distribution, and a certified copy be specially transmitted by the Superintendent to the Governors of Virginia and Tennessee; to the President of the United States; to the Members of Congress from Virginia and Tennessee; to the Members of the Legislature of Virginia; to the Mayor of Fredericksburg, Va.; to the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, and the U. S. Naval Academy at Annapo-

lis; to the several Universities and Colleges of Virginia and of the United States; to the Representatives of Foreign Governments to the United States; to the Scientific Societies of the United States and of Europe, of which the deceased was a member; to the University of Cambridge, England; to the several Chambers of Commerce of the United States; to the Agricultural Congress of the U. S.; and to the Agricultural Societies of Virginia, Missouri, Tennessee, Georgia, Mississippi, and North Carolina, the Seaboard Agricultural Society of Norfolk, and to the Massachusetts Agricultural Society, at Norfolk, Mass.; and also to Commodore Jansen, Delft, Holland, John Laird, Esq., M. P., Rev. Mr. Tremlett, London, England.

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE,

*February 1, 1873.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

*Washington City, D. C.*

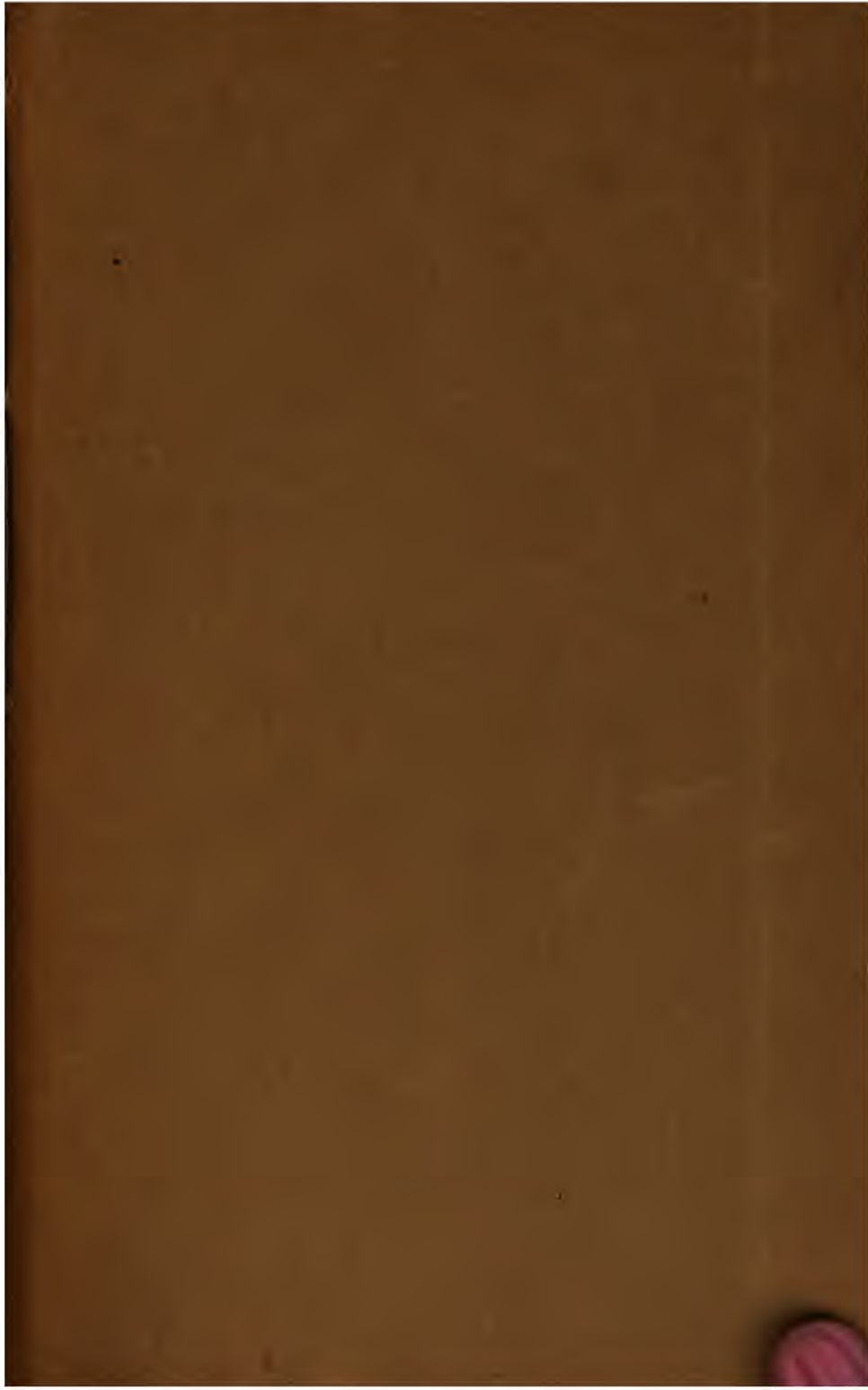
Superintendent M. F. MAURY, formerly of National Observatory, and late Professor of Physics, in Virginia Military Institute, died at 12:30 to-day. The distinguished scientific position of the deceased, and his world wide fame, make his death an event of more than

national concern. With this view, the Institute to which he gave his last services, deems it not unappropriate to ask the President of the United States to communicate the information of his death to the Representatives of Foreign countries at Washington.

J. T. L. PRESTON,  
*Acting Supt.*

A true copy from the records of the Academic Board of the Virginia Military Institute.

FRANCIS H. SMITH,  
*Superintendent.*





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